# THE RESOURCE SHARER

FEB 1975 RSTS-11 SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP NEWSLETTER VOL.1 NO. 4

## FROM THE EDITOR

LET ME START THIS NEWSLETTER WITH AN APOLOGY. I HAVE WRITTEN IT WHILE STANDING ON A "SOAPBOX". INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER YOU WILL FIND MY IDEAS FOR THE SIG'S GOALS AND AN ARTICLE ON WHAT I SEE AS A PROBLEM WITH FIELD SERVICE. PLEASE SEND ME YOUR IDEAS AND ARTICLES, MY HAND IS GETTING TIRED.

WHEN I FIRST PROPOSED THE RSTS SIG IT WAS MY INTENTION THAT IT SHOULD FIND ITS OWN DIRECTION AND NOT BE A PLACE FOR ME TO PUT MY PERSONAL SOAPBOX. THE FACT THAT RSTS HAS BEEN A REMARKABLY BUG-FREE SYSTEM MAY BE THE REASON THE SIG HAS BEEN SLOW IN FINDING DIRECTION. WE HAVE NOT HAD A COMMON RALLYING POINT LIKE THE RSX SIG(IE: RSX BUGS AND SPR PROBLEMS). I THINK EVERYONE OF OUR 400 MEMBERS HOPES AND EXPECTS SOMETHING FROM THE SIG. UNFORTUNATELY SO FAR ONLY 20 OR 30 MEMBERS HAVE DONE ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

BOB BRANTON
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## COME TO THE BEACH

FROM APRIL 15 THRU APRIL 18 THE SPRING DECUS SYMPOSIUM WILL BE HELD IN MIAMI BEACH,FLORIDA. IF YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN TO A DECUS SYMPOSIUM YOU REALLY HAVE MISSED SOMETHING. THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE COMMON INTERESTS AND PROBLEMS WITH OTHER USERS, AND TO DISCUSS WITH DEC PERSONNEL YOUR PROBLEMS AND NEEDS MAKES DECUS TRULY A UNIQUE MEETING. TIME AND TIME AGAIN I HAVE HEARD MEMBERS SAY DECUS IS THE MOST USEFUL MEETING THEY ATTEND, SO COME JOIN US ON THE BEACH.

SEVERAL SESSIONS ARE OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO RSTS USERS. THERE WILL BE A SIG MEETING WHERE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO THROW TOMATOES AT ME AND DISCUSS THE SIG, THE NEWSLETTER, BASIC PROGRAMMING STANDARDS, FILE STRUCTURE STANDARDS, AND USER FEELINGS ABOUT THE NEW RSTS DOCUMENTATION. ALSO THERE WILL BE A DEC RSTS PRODUCT PANEL, A MEETING FOR RSTS COMMERCIAL USERS, AND THE PRESENTATION OF SEVERAL RSTS APPLICATION PAPERS INCLUDING: TV ELECTION COVERAGE USING RSTS, A GENERALIZED SCHOOL/TOWN PAYROLL SYSTEM FOR RSTS/E, AND A RSTS/E TRANSACTION PROCESSING SYSTEM.

# GOALS FOR A RSTS SIG

FROM THE TIME I STARTED WORKING WITH A PRE-RELEASE RSTS V2 IN APRIL 1971 UNTIL NOW I HAVE CONSIDERED RSTS TO BE A GOOD PRODUCT RUNNING ON A GOOD MACHINE. DEC HAS NEVER PRODUCED A PROGRAMMING PRODUCT WITH RSTS'S UNIQUE COMMUNALITY OF SOFTWARE USE FOR SO MANY INSTALLATIONS(500+). THE MAJOR FLAW IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RSTS IS THAT DEC HAS NOT GIVEN ENOUGH OF A EAR TO USER DESIRES FOR RSTS SINCE ITS INCEPTION. THIS IS WHY I STARTED THE SIG.

LET ME DISCRIBE MY PERSONAL INTERPRETATION OF GENERAL GOALS FOR THE RSTS SIG:

1.RSTS IS STILL AN EVOLVING PRODUCT. UNTIL IT STABILIZES IN SUCH AREAS AS INTERNAL FILE HANDLING AND THE INCLUSION OF OTHER COMPILER LANGUAGES(COBOL,FORTRAN,ETC.), THE SIG SHOULD AS A GROUP PUT PRESSURE ON DEC TO INCLUDE THE USERS POINT OF VIEW IN THE PRODUCT'S DEVELOPMENT.

2.THE SIG SHOULD ENLIGHTEN DEC ON THE NEED FOR IMPROVED FIELD SUPPORT. THE RAMIFICATIONS OF A 16 OR 32 USER RSTS SYSTEM BEING DOWN A DAY BEFORE FIELD SUPPORT GETS THERE ARE ENORMOUS. WE MUST AS A GROUP MAKE THE DEC MANAGEMENT UNDERSTAND THIS.

3.THE SIG AS A GROUP NEEDS TO DEVELOP PROGRAM CODING AND FILE HANDLING(RECORD I/O) STANDARDS TO FACILITATE THE EXCHANGE OR SALE OF PROGRAMS BETWEEN MEMBERS. RSTS IS GOING TO BE AROUND AWHILE AND IF WE CAN DEVISE STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM EXCHANGE EARLY IN THE GAME MANY PROGRAMMING COMPATABILITY PROBLEMS CAN BECOME AVOIDED HEADACHES LATER.

4.THE SIG NEWSLETTER SHOULD SERVE AS A FORUM FOR USERS TO PRESENT THEIR PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS. IT SHOULD PROVIDE SPACE FOR USERS WITH SPECIAL INTERESTS(RSTS SUB-GROUPS) TO COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER. IT SHOULD PROVIDE SPACE FOR MEMBERS TO DISCRIBE BRIEFLY PROGRAMS THEY NEED, WANT TO GIVE AWAY, WANT TO EXCHANGE, OR WANT TO SELL.

5.THE SIG SHOULD WORK WITH THE DECUS LIBRARY STAFF ON THE MONITORING OF DECUS LIBRARY SUBMISSIONS. WE SHOULD ESTABLISH SIG STANDARDS FOR SUBMISSION.

6.THE SIG SHOULD HOLD REGIONAL WORKSHOPS FOR THOSE RSTS SIG SUB-GROUPS WISHING TO WORK ON SPECIAL APPLICATIONS.

7.THE SIG SHOULD OFFER A "WELCOME WAGON" SERVICE TO NEW RSTS INSTALLATIONS.

BOB BRANTON

## MY DREAM

LAST WEEK I HAD A NIGHTMARE. I DREAMT THAT MY RSTS SYSTEM WAS RUNNING AT 8:30 IN THE MORNING WITH MANY OF MY 100+ USERS WAITING IN LINE TO USE THE COMPUTER. ALL OF A SUDDEN BIT 0 ON THE ADDRESS REGISTER STUCK AND THERE I WAS WITH A DEAD MACHINE. SOMEONE IN THE CROWD OF USERS YELLED THIS IS A JOB FOR "FIELD-SERVICEMAN". SO QUICK AS A WINK I WENT TO MY PHONE AND CALLED HIS OFFICE. WITH A SPEED SOMEWHAT SLOWER THAN THE SPEED OF LIGHT(30 HOURS) "FIELD-SERVICEMAN" WAS ON-SITE. THOSE 30 HOURS OF PUTTING OUT USER "FIRES" THAT DEVELOPED AROUND ME IS MY IDEA OF HELL. THE WORST PART OF MY DREAM IS THE FACT THAT IT IS RE-OCCURING.

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## FIELD SERVICE

IS MY NIGHTMARE UNIQUE TO ME OR DO YOU HAVE THE SAME ONE? WE HAVE HAVE A SERVICE CONTRACT THAT IS SUPPOSTED TO PROVIDE US WITH SERVICE AND USUALLY EVENTUALLY DOES. THE FIELD SERVICE PERSONNEL ARE QUALITY WORKERS AND DO EXCEPTIONAL WORK. THE PROBLEM IN MY OPINION IS THAT FIELD SERVICE NEEDS MORE SUPPORT FROM MAYNARD.

DURING THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS DEC HAS BEEN SELLING COMPUTERS SO FAST THAT FIELD SERVICE HAS FALLEN BEHIND. WHEN I FIRST GOT MY MACHINE I COULD COUNT ON THE KIND OF FIELD SERVICE THAT YOU NEED AND EXPECT WITH A TIMESHARING SYSTEM. BUT AS THE NUMBER OF COMPUTERS IN MY AREA HAS GROWN THE RESPONSE TIME FROM FIELD SERVICE HAS ALSO GROWN. THE FIELD SERVICE STAFF HAS NOT BEEN EXPANDED FAST ENOUGH. AS A RESULT THE FIELD SERVICEMEN ARE RUNNING THEIR LEGS OFF TRING TO KEEP UP. THE USUAL ANSWER I GET WHEN I CALL FIELD SERVICE(EVEN AT 8:30 IN THE MORNING) IS THAT EVERYONE IS ALREADY ON CALL AND IT WILL BE AT LEAST TOMMORROW BEFORE THEY CAN GET TO MY MACHINE. WHEN AN OFFICE IS AVERAGING 60 TO 80 HOURS OF OVERTIME EACH WEEK AND TAKES 24 HOURS TO RESPOND TO A SERVICE CALL MORE SERVICEMEN ARE NEEDED.

ONCE THE SERVICEMAN IS ON-SITE HE NEEDS BETTER TEST ROUTINES. HAVE YOU EVER WATCHED A POOR FIELD SERVICEMAN TRY TO USE THE DIANOSTIC TESTS MAYNARD SUPPLIES THEM. MOST OF THOSE TESTS WERE DESIGNED TO BE USED AS ENGINEERING SPECIFICATION TESTS IN MAYNARD. THEY MAKE POOR SUBSTITUTES FOR FIELD TESTS ON A DOWN DEVICE. DEC NEEDS TO GIVE FIELD SERVICE TESTS THAT ARE BETTER TRACE AIDS FOR FINDING THE CAUSES OF DOWN DEVICES.

I HAVE HEARD QUOTES LIKE: "FIELD SERVICE MADE A 100% PROFIT LAST YEAR" AND "75% OF ALL REVENUES FIELD SERVICE COLLECTS GO BACK TO MAYNARD". THIS UPSETS ME. DEC NEEDS TO TAKE A LOOK AT THEIR FIELD SERVICE IN ITS PRESENT STATE. WHAT ONCE WAS A SELLING POINT IS NOW A LIBILITY. IT MUST BE IMPROVED.

I'LL BE INTERESTED IN YOUR COMMENTS.

BOB BRANTON

# SPR'S AND FIXES

Thanks to Jack Bouknight, Stuart Katz, and Jim Haynes for the following SPR's and fixes. If you have any fixes or SPR's for the newsletter, please send them to me in printable form.

1. SPR's FROM:
   Jack Bouknight
   Young Door Company
   Plymouth, IN 46563

The BATCH system program does not allow the use of the "!" character specification of the (1,3) library account in the RUN command. Apparently, line 14060 in the program removes the program name after the "!" as a comment. The problem is, of course, solved by explicitly stating (1,3) as the account, but this seems hardly appropriate after the introduction of the auxillary library accounts features in version 5B. See example below.

| | |
|---|---|
| $RUN !UT001 | gives an error such as $RUN by itself would. |
| $RUN (1,3)UT001 | works correctly. |

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During the SYSGEN process, if you answer L/A to the question of form of the questions, the system "bombs" with an F352 error when it tries to determine if the hardware for the floating point option is available and it isn't. This prevents us from using the automatic answer form of SYSGEN.

```
BEGINNING OF RSTS/E SYSTEM GENERATION.

QUESTIONS COME IN LONG AND SHORT FORMS.
IF YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH THEM, ANSWER
"S" FOR SHORT; OTHERWISE, ANSWER "L" FOR
LONG FORM.  APPEND "/A" TO ENABLE AUTO-
MATIC ANSWERS.  FORM ?  L/A

WILL THIS SYSTEM RUN ON A PDP-11/45 COM-
PUTER WITH FLOATING POINT PROCESSOR (YES
OR NO).

FPP  (11/45) ?
F352  Ø33Ø52
TIME:-Ø9:Ø7:48
```

The attached test program fails.

According to the BASIC Language manual, the "approximately equal to" operator === compares two floating point numbers to within 6 digits of accuracy. As shown by the test, either the function is checking only the mantissa and ignoring the exponent of the power of ten or it is just plain failing or the book is written wrong. Please hurry up and decide which is the case and fix it.

```
LIST
TEST        04:54 PM            15-JAN-75
100         A$ = CHR$(0)
                +CHR$(0)
                +CHR$(0)
                +CHR$(0)
                +CHR$(0)
                +CHR$(0)
                +CHR$(45%)
                +CHR$(16)
110         F = CVT$F(A$)
120         PRINT F
130         IF CVT$F(A$) == 0
            THEN
               PRINT "NEARLY ZERO"
            ELSE
               PRINT "NOT NEARLY ZERO"
300         END
```

```
READY

RUNNH
 .204636E-11
NOT NEARLY ZERO

READY
```

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2. LEFT ZERO FILL PATCH FROM:

STUART KATZ
COMMERCIAL COMPUTER SERVICES
CHICAGO, IL 60614

PATCH TO PROVIDE LEFT ZERO FILL IN A PRINT-USING STATEMENT. THIS PATCH MODIFIES THE CURRENT LEFT ASTRISK FILL CAPABILITY TO PRODUCE LEFT ZERO FILL. USING THE BASIC LOAD MAP UNDER THE ALLOCATION SYNOPSIS FIND <PU >_____ (LEFT MOST NUMBERS OF THE THREE)

```
OPTION:  PATCH
MODULE:  BASIC
ADDRESS: < PU >
OFFSET:  1634
OLD= 000052     NEW= 000060
CONTROL  C
```

THANKS TO TIM HART OF EVANS, GRIFFITH AND HART FOR HELPING US PROVIDE THIS PATCH.

3. FILCOM PATCH from:

Jim Haynes
Computer Center
University of Calif., Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

We just got V05B-24 up. I'm in the process of converting our various V05-21 goodies to the new system programs. One is enclosed in the form of a FILCOM between PIP as supplied by DEC and one to which we have aided a switch /WO which erases a file and then deletes it. This avoids the hazard of deleting a confidential file and having someone then acquire the disk blocks still containing the confidential material.

```
RUN FILCOM
'FILCOM' FILE COMPARISON PROGRAM V05-3
OUTPUT TO?
INPUT FILE #1? [209,246]PIP.BAS
INPUT FILE #2? [209,247]PIP.BAS
HOW MANY TO MATCH? 1
BASIC+ LINES? Y
BLANK LINES? N

**********
1) [209,246]PIP.BAS
1290 DATA "",0,0,0
1300 E%=ERR : M$="OUTPUT CLOSE" : RESUME 800
*****
2) [209,247]PIP.BAS
1290 DATA "WO",1,3,0,"",0,0,0
1300 E%=ERR : M$="OUTPUT CLOSE" : RESUME 800
**********
1) [209,246]PIP.BAS
4000 ON ERROR GOTO 0 : IF E9% THEN 1000 ELSE GOSUB 8000 :
        ON ERROR GOTO 4100 : KILL I$ : GOTO 4000
4100 E%=ERR : M$=I$ : GOSUB 8400 : RESUME 4000
*****
2) [209,247]PIP.BAS
4000 ON ERROR GOTO 0:
        IF E9% THEN 1000
        ELSE GOSUB 8000:
        ON ERROR GOTO 4100:
        GOSUB 4050 IF I0$="WO":
        KILL I$:
        GOTO 4000
4050 OPEN I$ FOR INPUT AS FILE 3%:
        FIELD #3%, 512% AS 00$:
        I1$=RIGHT(SYS(CHR$(6%)+CHR$(-8%)+CHR$(3%)),7%):
        LSET 00$=" ":
        PUT #3% FOR S2%=1% TO ASCII(I1$)+SWAP%(ASCII(RIGHT(I1$,2%))):
        CLOSE 3%:
        RETURN
4100 E%=ERR : M$=I$ : GOSUB 8400 : RESUME 4000
```

THIS FEATURE OF THE NEWSLETTER IS DESIGNED TO GIVE SIG MEMBERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST INFORMATION FROM OTHER USERS AND TO DESCRIBE AVAILABLE PROGRAMS OR SERVICES.

******WANTED******

LOOKING FOR ANYONE WHO HAS INTERFACED AN IBM SELECTRIC 1 OR II AS A TERMINAL FOR RSTS/E.

GEORGE J. ABE
DIR OF ADMIN SERVICES
SOUTH L.A. HEALTH PLAN
1731 W SANTA BARBARA AVE.
LOS ANGELES,CA. 90062
(213) 299-9471

******WANTED******

DOES ANY USER HAVE A RSTS PROGRAM THAT OPERATES A TEXAS INSTRUMENT ASR-733 TERMINAL WITH CASSETTE DRIVE AND AUTO DEVICE CONTROL. WE NEED TO TRANSFER MATERIAL FROM DISK TO CASSETTE AND FROM CASSETTE TO DISK. PIP IS DEFECTIVE IN TRANSFERING FROM CASSETTE TO DISK IF A LINE FEED IS CONTAINED IN A BASIC STATEMENT.

G. L. HOPKINS
THE MASTERS SCHOOL
DOBBS FERRY, NEW YORK 10522

******WANTED******

USER COMMENTS ON THE NEW RSTS DOCUMENTATION. BOB GAFFORD OF DEC IS TRING TO GET USER INPUT ON RSTS DOCUMENTATION. HE WILL BE AT THE SIG MEETING IN MIAMI. UNTIL THAT TIME HE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS YOU MIGHT HAVE. WRITE HIM AT:

BOB GAFFORD
MANAGER SOFTWARE DOC.
DEC BLDG 5-5
146 MAIN ST.
MAYNARD,MA. 01754

******WANTED******

WE ARE LOOKING FOR SUMMER JOBS FOR OUR COOP STUDENTS WHO ARE MAJORING IN COMPUTER SCIENCE. THEY HAVE HAD AT LEAST TWO COURSES ON SOSU'S RSTS SYSTEM.

MS. BETTY CARTWRIGHT
COOPERATIVE EDUCATION OFFICE
SOUTHEASTERN ST. UNIVERSITY
DURANT,OK 74701
(405) 924-0121 EX 454

## THE PROGRAM EXCAHNGE

THE NEXT THREE PAGES CONTAIN PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM ABSTRACTS THAT SIG MEMBERS HAVE SENT TO ME.

TITLE:
129 KEY VERIFY EMULATOR

AUTHOR:
MS. M KAUR
DIGITGRAPH COMPUTER SYSTEMS
P.O. BOX 4249
TUCSON,ARIZ. 85717

ABSTRACT:
OPERATES CRT SIMULIARLY TO AN 129 KEYPUNCH TO ALLOW VERIFYING OF KEYPUNCHED CARD DECKS.

CONFIGURATION:
RSTS/E AND PROBABLY RSTS V4

COST:
$50

```
                                "DETACHER"
                                   BY
                              JOHN F. HAASE
 ***************************************************************************
2 !      THIS ROUTINE WILL DETACH A JOB FROM ANY TERMINAL AND RETURN
                TO WHEREVER THE USER WANTS ( ALMOST )
3 !      "DETACH.BAC" MUST BE STORED IN ACCT# [1,2] WITH A PROT OF <192>
***************************************************************************

4 !                USER MUST EXECUTE:

         V$ = SYS(CHR$(8%)+"XXX/YYY  + "*" + V1$)
         CHAIN "$DETACH"

5!    XXX   =      PROGRAM NAME TO RTN TO (CANNOT BE A .BAS PGM)
     /YYY   =      OPTIONAL - IF USED, IS STMNT # IN "XXX" TO RETURN TO
  "*"+V1$   =      OPTIONAL - IF USED, PASSES PARAMETERS TO DETACHED PGM
                                VIA CORE COMMON
6!
*************************  BEGIN ACTUAL MODULE CODE  ********************
7 Z9$ = SYS(CHR$(7%))   :  Z9 = 0
         !          1. FIP CALL TO GET USERS CORECOMMON STRING
                    2. SET STMNT # TO ZERO  (CAN'T USE INTEGER HERE OR WE
                                                 CAN'T TRAP ERROR)
8 IF     INSTR(1%,Z9$,"*") = 0%   THEN   Z8$ = SYS(CHR$(8%) + "")
   ELSE    Z8$ = SYS(CHR$(8%) + RIGHT(Z9$,INSTR(1%,Z9$,"*")))
         !RESET CORECOMMON TO LEAVE OUT THE PROGRAM CHAIN LINK
9 IF INSTR(1%,Z9$,"*") <> 0% THEN Z9$ = LEFT(Z9$,INSTR(1%,Z9$,"*")-1%)
         !LOOK FOR PARAMETER-PASSING IN -CORECOMMON-
                    IF THERE, SAVE ONLY RETURN CHAIN LINK
                    IF NONE, CONTINUE
10 IF LEN(Z9$) > 25% OR  INSTR(1%,Z9$,"/") > 19%  OR LEFT(Z9$,5%) =
         "[0,1]"  OR LEFT(Z9$,5%) = "[1,1]"  THEN  GOTO 20
   ELSE IF INSTR(1%,Z9$,"/") = 0%  THEN GOTO 14
   ELSE Z9 = VAL(RIGHT(Z9$,INSTR(1%,Z9$,"/")+1%))
11 !     1.  IF ILLEGAL CHAIN LINK                  TRAP IT
         2.  IF NO STARTING STMNT #                 DEFAULT TO BEGINNING
         3.  ELSE SET UP STARTING STMNT #
12       IF Z9 > 32767  OR  Z9 < 0  THEN GOTO 20
   ELSE IF LEFT(Z9$,5%) = "[1,2]"  OR  LEFT(Z9$,1%) = "$"  THEN Z9 = 0
13 Z9$  =  LEFT(Z9$,INSTR(1%,Z9$,"/")-1%)
                    !SAVE ONLY PROGRAM NAME IN Z9$
14 PRINT FOR Z9% = 1% TO 10%:PRINT TAB(20%);"YOUR JOB IS DETACHING TO":
   PRINT TAB(22%);'"';Z9$;'" AT ';TIME$(0%):PRINT TAB(25%);" ON ";DATE$(0%)
15 PRINT FOR Z9% = 1% TO 6%:PRINT TAB(28%);" BYE-BYE":PRINT:PRINT
16! ***********************************************************************
         **********  ACTUAL DETACHMENT PERFORMED HERE  **********

17!  ///// THIS IS THE PLACE TO CHANGE THE PRIORITY TO MAKE THE /////
     ///// DETACHED JOB ACT LIKE A "BATCH" JOB ////////////////////////

18 Z8$  =  SYS(CHR$(6%) + CHR$(7%))  :  CHAIN Z9$ Z9

19! ***********************************************************************
                  *********  ILLEGAL CHAIN LINK NOTICE  *********

20 PRINT:PRINT "ILLEGAL RETURN SPECIFIED:  ";Z9$:PRINT:
   PRINT "**********  NO DETACH PERFORMED  **********":
   PRINT FOR Z9% = 1% TO 10%
21 END
```

**THE FOLLOWING IS AN ONE PAGE ABSTRACT OF A TRANSACTION PROCESSING SYSTEM THAT ROBERT LANE AND ROBERT JONES HAVE WRITTEN. THEY ARE INTERESTED IN ANY COMMENTS OR INTEREST SIG MEMBERS MIGHT HAVE IN IT.**

# RSTS/E TRANSACTION PROCESSING SYSTEM

ROBERT A. LANE AND ROBERT H. JONES IV
CHRYSLER CORPORATION
TECHNICAL PROCESS SYSTEMS PLANNING
POST OFFICE BOX 1919, CIMS 416-18-13
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48231

RSTS/E TPS IS A GENERALIZED TRANSACTION PROCESSING SYSTEM WHICH PROVIDES THE FACILITIES NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT SPECIFIC USER CODED APPLICATION TRANSACTIONS WITHIN THE CONSTRAINTS OF THE RSTS/E TIMESHARING SYSTEM. IN THIS CONTEXT, A "TRANSACTION PROCESSING FACILITY" IS DEFINED AS:

> "A FACILITY WHICH PROVIDES ONE OR MORE TERMINAL USERS WITH THE ABILITY TO ENTER A TRANSACTION CODE FOLLOWED BY AN OPTIONAL STRING OF PARAMETERS WHICH TOGETHER INSTRUCT THE COMPUTER TO PERFORM A PREDEFINED FUNCTION OR SERIES OF FUNCTIONS. "

RSTS/E TPS ENABLES SHARED ACCESSING AND UPDATING OF SYSTEM DATA BASES, SIMULTANEOUS REPORT GENERATION AND LINE PRINTER SPOOLING. IT ALSO PROVIDES EXTENSIVE ACCOUNTING AND RECOVERY FEATURES.

TPS IS INTENDED FOR USE BY NON-TECHNICAL PEOPLE WHO MAY HAVE HAD VERY LITTLE, IF ANY, EXPOSURE TO COMPUTERS. THEREFORE, ONE OF THE MAJOR DESIGN OBJECTIVES OF TPS IS EASE OF USE. SYSTEM MESSAGES ARE AS MEANINGFUL AND DESCRIPTIVE AS WE COULD MAKE THEM, AND ALL COMMANDS TO THE SYSTEM ARE IN "ENGLISH-LIKE" NOTATION.

THE "TRAP" LANGUAGE AND THE "TRAP" COMPILER ARE PROVIDED WITH TPS. "TRAP" ENABLES THE USER TO CODE APPLICATION TRANSACTIONS QUICKLY AND EASILY WITHOUT BEING BURDENED WITH THE IRRELEVANT OVERHEAD NECESSARY IN MOST "GENERAL PURPOSE" PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES.

RSTS/E TPS IS WRITTEN ENTIRELY IN THE "BASIC-PLUS" PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE, AND THEREFORE REQUIRES NEITHER MODIFICATIONS TO THE PDP-11 RSTS/E SOFTWARE, NOR EXTENSIVE PROGRAMMING KNOWLEDGE.

# LETTERS

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DEAR EDITOR:

THANK YOU FOR THE COPY OF "RESOURCE SHARER". I WAS PARTICULARLY WORRIED TO HEAR THE NEWS OF RSTS V4'S IMMINENT DEMISE. WE USE V4A AND SIMPLY CANNOT AFFORD TO UPGRADE TO V5. CAN THE SIG BRING ANY PRESSURE TO BEAR ON DEC TO CONTINUE SUPPORTING V4? IF NOT IS IT POSSIBLE TO PERSUADE DEC TO ISSUE SOURCE CODES OF V4B AT A REASONABLE PRICE TO EXISTING USERS WHEN THEY DO CEASE THEIR SUPPORT.

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LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER STUDIES
LOUGHBOROUGH, LEICHESTERSHIRE, ENGLAND

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DEAR EDITOR:

FOR THE WISH LIST:

1. CLUSTERSIZE OPTION WITH UPDATE MODE.
2. OVERLAYS OR MORE COMMON AREA.
3. A STRING FUNCTION TO INSERT A SUBSTRING INTO ANOTHER STRING.
   EX: T$=INSRT("ABC",2,"X") RESULTING IN T$="AXC"
   OR MID("ABC",2,1)="X"

JOHN RIZENTHALTER
COORS PORCELAIN CO.
600 9TH ST.
GOLDEN,CO. 80401

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DEAR EDITOR:

WISH LISTS: I FULLY AGREE THAT DEC MUST GIVE USERS MORE ATTENTION IF WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO PAY REAL MONEY FOR SUPPORT SERVICE. BUT I HAVE SOME QUALMS ABOUT THE WISH PROPOSAL. LOCALLY WE HAVE SEVERAL PEOPLE WHO ARE REAL PESTS, DAILY FILLING THE GRIPE FILE WITH HALF-BAKED SUGGESTIONS FOR SOFTWARE IMPROVEMENT AND WITH QUESTIONS THAT ARE ANSWERED IN THE MANUAL. IF THESE PEOPLE LEARNED OF THE WISH LIST THEY WOULD QUICKLY FLOOD THE SYSTEM. AT THE VERY LEAST WISHES SHOULD BE RESTRICTED TO CERTIFIED REPRESENTATIVES OF PAYING SUBSCRIBERS. AND IT WOULD BE NICER IF THERE WERE SOME WAY THE WISHES COULD BE RANKED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE AND THEN PRESENTED TO DEC BY DELUS AS DEMANDS. THIS WOULD STRETCH OUT THE RESPONSE TIME RATHER BADLY; BUT THEN WISHES ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE IMPLEMENTED VERY QUICKLY IN ANY CASE. HOW DOES SHARE DECIDE WHAT TO DEMAND FROM IBM?

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